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SPORTS SCAN

Basketball

Lawyer says suit against Magic has no merit: Magic Johnson's attorney said Friday a lawsuit filed by a former employee of a health club alleging she was fired after refusing Johnson's sexual advances "is frivolous and completely without merit."

Regina Miner-Nichols, who worked for Sports Club L.A. from 1988-92, filed suit in the Santa Monica branch of Los Angeles Superior Court against the club for wrongful termination.

Nichols told KTLA-TV that Johnson, the former Lakers star and coach who now owns part of the team, wanted to have a relationship with her, called her on the phone and offered her money for sex.

She also claims Johnson "grabbed her in a sexually explicit way," KTLA reported.

"This is another example of an individual attempting to use the courts to extract money from high-profile, well-known individuals," Johnson's attorney, Howard Weitzman, told The Associated Press. "Mr. Johnson vehemently denies that he did anything wrong or inappropriate regarding this person and will not allow himself to become a victim of this type of pressure."

Suns want lawsuit against NBA in state court: The Phoenix Suns have asked a federal judge to have its lawsuit against the NBA concerning the league's voiding of A.C. Green's contract sent back to state court.

The Suns and Green sued on Aug. 5 after the NBA nullified a five-year, $26 million contract the veteran forward signed on July 26.

Green and the Suns are seeking a preliminary injunction to block the league's decision to void the contract as well as a permanent declaration that the contract is valid and binding.

The Suns also want the NBA to pay for the team's legal fees in the case.

Football

Cardinals sign top pick Miller, Marshall: The Arizona Cardinals on Friday inked rookie linebacker Jamir Miller, the last first-round draft pick to sign, and added veteran linebacker Wilber Marshall as well.

Miller, the No. 10 pick overall out of UCLA, was the lone Cardinals holdout after second-round pick Chuck Levy reported on Wednesday.

Marshall, a three-time Pro Bowler, played under Buddy Ryan with the Chicago Bears from 1984-88 and with the Houston Oilers last season, but was hampered by a hamstring injury.

Broncos ink Russell: Running back Leonard Russell, a 1,000-yard rusher who was released by New England in a contract dispute, agreed to contract terms Friday with the Denver Broncos.

Russell was scheduled to sign the deal today, Broncos spokesman Jim Saccomano said. Terms were not released.

Russell was in attendance Friday night at the Broncos' preseason game at San Francisco. He strengthens a Broncos backfield that already includes Rod Bernstine, Glyn Milburn and Robert Delpino.

Golf

Four tied at 6 under at PGA seniors event: Before the opening round of the Senior PGA First of America Classic, the tour's leading money winner, Lee Trevino, predicted a score of 6-under could win the $650,000 tournament.

Perhaps Trevino should revise that prediction because four players — Isao Aoki, Jim Albus, Graham Marsh and Jimmy Powell — fired 6-under 66s Friday to lead by just one stroke over the threesome of Larry Mowry, Tom Wargo and Dave Stockton.

Aoki's 66 included an eagle on the 534-yard par-5 seventh hole, a hole he had not seen until he played it Friday morning.

Gibson takes lead at CMC LPGA Classic: Janice Gibson, never a winner or even a leader in nine years as a pro, shot a 6-under-par 66 Friday for her lowest round ever and a one-stroke lead after the first round of the inaugural Children's Medical Center LPGA Classic.

Gibson, 33, had missed the cut in her last three tournaments. Her round was anything but routine.

She had nine birdies, six pars and three bogeys on the Jack Nicklaus-designed Country Club of the North while taking a one-stroke lead over native Peruvian Alicia Dibos. Another shot back were Jill Briles-Hinton, Barb Thomas and Rosie Jones.

Mochrie makes charge at British Women's Open: American Donie Mochrie, putting to good use some tips from Paul Azinger, shot a 7-under-par 66 Friday but trailed Sweden's Liselotte Neumann by one stroke at the halfway mark of the $500,000 British Women's Open.

Mochrie, who shot a 73 in the first round, had a two-round total of 139.

Neumann, winner of the U.S. Open in 1988 for her first career victory on the LPGA Tour, led the field with a 138 after a bogey-free second round of 67 that included six birdies. Four came in the last six holes, including putts from 25 feet and 18 feet.

Just two strokes behind Neumann was tournament favorite Laura Davies of England, who fired a 66 on Friday for a 140.

Ex-USC golfer seeks second straight U.S. Women's Amateur title: Jill McGill, who recently completed her career at USC, moved within one victory of her second consecutive U.S. Women's Amateur title by rallying for a 1-up triumph over 1994 NCAA champion Emilee Klein on Friday.

Wendy Ward, McGill's opponent in today's 36-hole final, shot a 6-under-par 30 on the front nine on the way to a 7-and-5 rout of Andra Baxter at The Homestead resort's Cascades Course. It was the most lopsided victory in the Women's Amateur semifinals since 1977, when Canada's Cathy Sherk was a 9-and-8 winner over Brenda Goldsmith of San Antonio.

Tennis

Martinez upset in Virginia Slims of L.A. quarters: Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez of Spain was upset by No. 10 Amy Frazier 6-4, 7-6 (7-1) Friday in the quarterfinals of the Virginia Slims of Los Angeles being held in Manhattan Beach.

Frazier's victory meant the top three seeds were knocked out of the $400,000 tournament. Second-seeded Martina Navratilova lost Thursday to No. 13 Ann Grossman 4-6, 7-5, 6-4, and No. 3 Lindsay Davenport withdrew with a strained muscle in her left calf.

In other quarterfinal matches, No. 8 Sabine Appelmans of Belgium continued the streak of upsets by surprising No. 4 Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic 6-4, 4-6, 6-4, and seventh-seeded Julie Halard of France eliminated Patricia Hy of Canada 3-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Grossman downed No. 5 Zina Garrison in the night match, 3-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-2.

Edberg advances to semis of ATP Championship: Stefan Edberg defeated a hobbled Amos Mansdorf on Friday night to move into the semifinals of the $1.72 million ATP Championship.

Mansdorf had won the first set 7-5 against a ragged Edberg, the No. 2 seed.

Edberg's semifinal opponent will be third-seeded Michael Stich of Germany, who beat Alex O'Brien, 6-2, 6-4.

Defending champion Michael Chang advanced the same way he did last year, beating Jason Stoltenberg 6-1, 3-6, 7-5. He will meet the resurgent David Wheaton, who eliminated seventh-seeded Jim Courier, 7-6 (7-3), 2-6, 6-3.

General

Devers' track season ends with injury: Gail Devers, the 1992 Olympic gold medalist in the 100 meters and American record holder in the 100-meter hurdles, will miss the remainder of the 1994 track and field season with a left hamstring injury.

Devers was slated to run in the Pan Africa-USA Track and Field Meet in Durham, N.C. this weekend.

According to her coach, Bob Kersee, Devers was struggling with the hamstring during the indoor season. She aggravated it at the national championship at Knoxville, Tenn., in June. Although Devers has recovered, Kersee suggested rest.

Compiled from Signal news services

Shaq halts Russia's upset hopes

He scores 21 to help U.S. break open close game

By Ellis Simmons
AP Basketball Writer

TORONTO — Shaquille O'Neal showed Russia some superpower moves Friday night to end any hope of a huge upset at the World Championship of Basketball.

O'Neal scored 11 of his 21 points in a three-minute span of the second half to break open a close game, and Dream Team II went on to a 111-94 victory at SkyDome in its final tuneup before the medal round starts Saturday.

In tonight's semifinals, Dream Team II faces Croatia, an 81-55 loser to Croatia on Friday night. Greece coach Makis Desbrovos rested his best players in the second half and said after the game that he was saving them for the bronze medal game against the Russia-Croatia loser.

The United States, in its first meeting with the former Soviet Union since a 1988 Olympic defeat, was loaded with confidence after consecutive victories of more than 50 points against Australia and Puerto Rico. But the Americans, averaging 123 points on 62 percent shooting in their first five games, led just 52-44 at halftime, missing 22 of 42 shots.

The start of the second half didn't see the situation improve as the Russians twice closed within five points, the last time at 56-51 with 17 minutes left.

Then O'Neal entered the game, and the Russians had no answer.

Three of Dream Team II's six victories have been by less than 24 points.

Crow

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up and bites you."

Crow has proven that he can adapt to any style of car at Saugus Speedway, with the exception of Sportsman. Still, some drivers were a little surprised he is doing so well.

"He's learning pretty fast," said Canyon Country resident John Watkinson, who is currently sixth in points. "I always try to give him a few tips."

But Watkinson said he's cautious about what kind of tips he gives Crow.

"He can beat me at my own game," Watkinson said.

In last week's race, Watkinson beat Crow and ended in fourth place. Crow got turned around in lap 23 of the 25-lap feature race and failed to finish.

It was one week where Crow missed his chance to sneak up on anybody.

Day 1

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No further meetings were scheduled, and the parties said they probably would meet separately with mediators before calling another bargaining session.

Though mediators can cajole sides toward an agreement through friendly intervention, they are powerless to force sides to agree. In 1981, mediator Kenneth Moffett was unable to get players and owners to agree until the strike reached 50 days.

Owners, meanwhile, imposed a limited gag order on themselves. Executive council chairman Bud Selig said only he and Ravitch will be the official spokesmen for management. Any other owner who wants to speak must get permission from Selig, Ravitch or management's public relations executive.

"It's not a gag order," Selig said by telephone from Milwaukee. "You want people to be well-versed in what they're doing so they know exactly what's going on. Other people will do things locally, but Dick and myself will speak nationally. We're ensuring that people know what the daily events are because they're a lot of people not in the loop. They're spread out all over the country."

Four owners — George Steinbrenner of the New York Yankees, Margo Schott of the Cincinnati Reds, Peter Angelos of the Baltimore Orioles and Jerry McMorris of the Colorado Rockies — made critical comments Thursday about either Ravitch or the owners' bargaining stances.

"I hope it doesn't encourage the players to think the owners will abandon their collective bargaining objective," Ravitch said. "My only concern is the players could get the wrong impression from that."

The strike — baseball's eighth walkout since 1972 — began after Thursday night's games ended. The main issue is the union's refusal to allow teams to limit salaries.

Players packed their gear and left ballparks wondering if a deal would be reached to salvage a portion of the season's final 52 days and 669 games. Fourteen games were wiped out Friday.

In Philadelphia, fans rallied against the strike outside Veterans Stadium, holding protest signs and vowing never to attend another game. In Pittsburgh, Pirates manager Jim Leyland was trying to get used to an unwanted summer vacation.

"It's tragic we're not playing," Leyland said. "I'm not happy I can't put on my uniform."

Guided tours continued on schedule at Houston's Astrodome as tourists watched maintenance crews clean up what may be the last tobacco stains of summer off the artificial turf.

Empty orange and blue seats were all you could see at Tiger Stadium in Detroit, where a game against the Angels had been scheduled.

"It's awful quiet," said Ron Nankervis, a guard at Gate 14, where on a normal day players would be trickling in. "At 7 p.m. yesterday, the players got escorted out, and that's the end of it."

The union called Friday's unexpected meeting because it wanted a response to revenue-sharing ideas proposed to owners last week. The union claims it is caught in a dispute between large- and small-market clubs, which contend they are unable to redistribute revenue among themselves unless it comes from players. Owners say they must have a salary cap to cure what they say are baseball's economic problems.

"The question here is not how the clubs run their business internally," Ravitch said at a news conference, his voice rising almost to a shout. "That was negotiated over a 14-month period and settled."

Clubs agreed in January to new revenue-sharing rules, but said they won't take effect until the union agrees to a salary cap.

"The basic response is that shifting money around doesn't solve this problem," Fehr said. "Shifting players' money around apparently does solve the problem."

The union is intent on preserving the system of free agency and salary arbitration, leaving the sides talking about economic proposals that cannot be reconciled.

The players' three ideas called for clubs to:

- Give teams in certain markets a greater share of money from future expansion fees;
- Share local broadcasting revenue among all clubs based on the size of the market where each club is located;
- Enhance revenue-sharing by decreasing the amount of ticket money going to visiting teams in the National League from 5 to 20 percent, eliminating what the union called a "tax" on pay-cable revenues, and creating a subsidy pool that would give additional money to about a half dozen clubs.

Service representative Trent Breitenbucher, season-ticket holders will either receive refunds to the end of the season or credit toward 1995 tickets.

Tickets bought by mail can be returned by mail after the game has been cancelled by writing to the California Angels, Ticket Office, P.O. Box 61000, Anaheim, 92803.

However, tickets purchased for groups of 30 or more can write P.O. Box 2000 for refunds, said Maximme Zambrano, manager of season and group sales.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

Strike

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He recently took care of obtaining a charter flight from Miami to St. Louis after Cardinals President Stuart Meyer reneged on an agreement to provide a team flight.

Zeile and assistant rep Tom Pagnozzi set up a flight on a DC-9 that cost $600 a person, including refundable. The players' union picked up part of the cost.

It was not known how Snyder, who lives in Laguna Beach, will spend the off-season. Repeated phone calls to his agent, Jeffrey Moorad, were not returned.

Fans who purchased tickets for any remaining Dodger or Angel game might wonder how to fill the time they would have spent at the ball park, and how to get their money back, if they want?

Both Los Angeles-area teams have specific refund policies. Dodger season-ticket holders received a letter from the team offering either credit toward any 1994 postseason or 1995 regular-season tickets, said Bill Hunter, manager of game sales. Ticket holders seeking a full refund will receive refund checks at the end of each canceled homestand.

Individuals who bought tickets through the Dodgers may return the tickets to the stadium for a refund only after the game's been canceled, Hunter said.

They also can mail their tickets to Los Angeles Dodgers, Ticket Department, P.O. Box 86300, Los Angeles, 90086-9908.

People who bought tickets through Ticketmaster can bring them back to the point of purchase to receive a full refund — service charges included.

The Angels' policy is very much the same. According to Customer Service representative Trent Breitenbucher, season-ticket holders will either receive refunds to the end of the season or credit toward 1995 tickets.

Tickets bought by mail can be returned by mail after the game has been cancelled by writing to the California Angels, Ticket Office, P.O. Box 61000, Anaheim, 92803.

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BRIEFS

Three win VWGC Accuracy tournament

VALENCIA — Accuracy was this week's Valencia Women's Golf Club tournament with players given points for landing in sand traps, water, out of bounds, and three-putting greens. The player with the least points won.

Ai Vina Valencia, that was Dorothy Landis and Newhall's Aileen Jones, who tied with four points. Jones was also closest to the pin on the 17th hole.

At Sand Hills, Linda Sayre and Leslie Lentz tied for first in Flight 1 (17 to 29 handicap) with three points. Newhall's Donna Mazzocco was third (five), while Jackie Nichols of Valencia and Helen Scheiner of Newhall tied for fourth with six points. Vera Martin of Newhall was closest to the pin on the 11th hole.

In Flight 2 (30 to 40 handicap), Valencia's Mimi Swart won with four points, with Joan Patterson second (five) and Lois Rhees third (six). Swart was closest to the pin on No. 11.

On Nov. 7, the A, B and C teams from the club will be competing in the WAGA team finals at Riverridge Golf Course in Oxnard. The Stableford Scoring System will be used.

Golf event to benefit Kidney Foundation

LOS ANGELES — The Exchange Club of Calver City is hosting the Cadillac Invitational Golf Tournament to benefit the National Kidney Foundation of Southern California on Sept. 12 at Wilshire Country Club.

Members of the winning team will receive a trip to the National Playoffs at Pebble Beach to compete against other regional winners.

The cost is $250 per player and includes greens fees, cart, lunch and an awards dinner banquet.

More information can be obtained by calling Gus Rendon at (310) 842-9000.

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